

Meeting of 2002-6-3- SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES  
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
LAWTON CITY COUNCIL  
JUNE 3, 2002 - 5:00 P.M.  
WAYNE GILLEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Mayor Cecil E. Powell,                      Also Present:  
Presiding                      Bill Baker, City Manager  
   John Vincent, City Attorney  
   Brenda Smith, City Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Mayor Powell. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:                      Randy Bass, Ward One  
   James Hanna, Ward Two  
   Amy Ewing-Holmstrom, Ward Four  
   \*Robert Shanklin, Ward Five  
   Barbara Moeller, Ward Six  
   Stanley Haywood, Ward Seven  
   Michael Baxter, Ward Eight

ABSENT:                      Glenn Devine, Ward Three

\*Shanklin entered as shown below.

BUSINESS ITEM:

1. Consider and discuss the proposed preliminary FY 2002-2003 City of Lawton Budget. Exhibits: Budget distributed previously.

Baker introduced Larry Mitchell, Assistant City Manager, and welcomed him to the City staff. He reviewed Mitchell's background and qualifications. Mitchell said he is happy to be here.

Baker said he sent information on solid waste studies and the information on mechanized refuse collection which may be helpful in the future.

Baker said information was sent recommending a change in the City Clerk's Office by deleting a senior secretary position and adding a deputy city clerk position. Total staff would remain at three and it would allow for cross training and better coverage of the duties. The change would result in a savings of \$552 this year due to pay plan steps of individuals and it would cause an increase in cost over the next 15 years of approximately \$7,000.

MOVED by Hanna, SECOND by Moeller, to approve the recommendation of the City Manager and City Clerk for the personnel in the City Clerk's Office.

Ewing-Holmstrom asked for further information. Baker reviewed his comments shown above noting it would not be \$7,000 more per year but \$7,000 total over the 15 year life of the pay plan provided both employees remained in the same job for that period of time.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Hanna, Ewing-Holmstrom, Moeller, Haywood, Baxter, Bass. NAY: None. MOTION CARRIED.

\*Shanklin entered at this time.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

Jerry Ihler, Public Works Director, and Mike Shaw, Assistant Director, reviewed the department's budget and distributed a revised organizational chart showing Animal Welfare remaining in the Public Works Department. Several divisions are funded through special accounts, such as drainage maintenance, wastewater maintenance, sewer rehab, etc. Traffic Engineer position was vacant all year, duties were handled by Building Development, and

the position in Public Works is being deleted. Also recommended for deletion are the senior clerical positions at both the Water Treatment Plant and the Wastewater Treatment Plant, as well as one mechanic in Equipment Maintenance provided trash collection is done once a week instead of twice so there would be fewer trucks to maintain. Reduction of ten employees in Solid Waste Collection is recommended due to once a week pick up.

Ihler said his staff had identified a savings of \$40,000 in solid waste disposal by not purchasing wheels for the trash compacting equipment, which was modified to perform better, and to use \$25,000 of that amount to be able to retain one kennel assistant in Animal Welfare and use \$15,000 for the Street Division for the requirements contract for street, driveway and sidewalk repair due to water line breaks.

Shanklin asked that the budget be reviewed page by page and this was done.

Ihler requested one construction inspector for the sewer technical division to televise the sewer lines and said an employee had been transferred from the landfill for the last eight months to accomplish this; it will be funded from a special account rather than the general fund.

The 18% increase in the wastewater collection division is due to a large capital outlay item; the 19% decrease in solid waste is due to once a week pick up; sewer rehab design group increase is the result of the additional employee; sewer construction decrease of \$449,000 is due to last year's purchase of a large amount of pipe since a good price was received. The 100 accounts, personal services, include the 3% cost of living and 2.5% step increases for employees, as well as reductions of employee positions.

The Street Division shows a \$94,000 increase in the 200 accounts, and \$85,000 of that is for the contract for street, driveway and sidewalk repair discussed earlier. The Water Plant 201 account shows an increase due to chemical costs to be able to add carbon to the water to reduce the odor and taste problem if that occurs again this year. The Waurika assessment increased \$73,000. The Water Plant electricity and gas account shows an increase anticipating the ozone filters will be on line before the end of this fiscal year. Ihler said the 300 capital outlay accounts are prioritized for the entire department, so some divisions show large increases or decreases from previous years. Total amount of capital outlay funding continues to decrease due to budget constraints and the fleet being in fair shape. Shanklin asked if the equipment was adequate to get the job done. Ihler said yes and noted some repair costs are getting higher as equipment ages. Mayor Powell said the Street Superintendent has some ideas that may help keep the equipment in better working order.

Baxter said Ihler's information shows a \$480,112 difference in the solid waste collection as compared to a savings of \$315,000 shown in the budget book. Ihler said \$315,000 was the personnel costs and going from 13 to 8 trucks being operational each day and a minor fuel cost adjustment. Ihler said if twice a week collection continues, three trucks per year should be replaced, and the department has been receiving funds to replace two per year. Cost of the trucks are \$75,000 each. Baxter said that was not clearly shown. Ihler said the money that would have been used to buy two packer trucks was proposed to be used to purchase other capital outlay items. Baxter said that should have been explained. Baker said the point was well taken.

Moeller asked what position they would be in if they continue twice a week collection and do not buy the trucks. Ihler said crews could get by but they would fall behind on the replacement schedule and maintenance costs would rise.

Shanklin asked how many trucks there were. Ihler said 13 residential and four commercial trucks that operate daily; the overall inventory is 24 with the rest being used as backups.

Ihler said a 10% cut in personnel in Public Works amounted to \$1.5 million, or 18 positions, and the City Manager chose not to delete all of them because it would have resulted in reducing or eliminating street sweeping, but 15 of the 18 positions were deleted by the City Manager. He said solid waste collection would still be provided, although at a lesser frequency, and items such as water line repair and sewer back up services could not be reduced and respond adequately to citizens' needs. The Street Division cannot be reduced due to the work load and due to the FEMA funding that was provided.

Capital outlay requests for each division of Public Works were individually reviewed. The Street Division's proposed purchase of a motor grader was discussed, and it was noted that the old equipment could possibly be used at the lakes. Ihler said the sewer rehab crews may also have need of it.

Wastewater Collection Division proposes purchasing two truck mounted jet rodders which allow crews to remove sewer blockages without using the old metal rods which have resulted in workers' comp claims in the past. These are smaller units, and a larger vacuum truck is proposed to be purchased for the Wastewater Maintenance Division.

Water Plant capital outlay consists of maintenance software which is tied to the timing of the pumps to allow proper maintenance. Wastewater Plant capital outlay includes equipment to allow methane gas to be produced to

operate the boilers and digesters. A water distillation unit is being sought as the existing equipment requires frequent and expensive maintenance. A double disc pump would replace existing equipment and provide a long-term savings. Analysis equipment allows for completion of state and federal reports on environmental quality.

Solid Waste capital outlay includes purchase of containers, and individual container costs were identified. Solid Waste disposal includes the last payment on a chipper. The \$40,000 compactor wheels are requested to be deleted and funds used elsewhere as previously explained.

Shanklin asked what would be done with grass clippings if they were delivered to the landfill separately. Ihler said they could be placed on the Silk property and mixed with dirt to be used for daily cover.

Drainage Maintenance requests a 4 WD pick up with wench to be able to get mowing and grading equipment out of drainage ditches when they become stuck. Staff received a demonstration of the equipment and it appeared to work. Shanklin asked what they have been doing in this regard and Ihler said a dozer can do this but it requires pulling the dozer off of whatever work it was doing.

It was noted that the old flush truck will be used for sewer rehab. Discussion was held on the number of animals picked by Animal Welfare and adopted from the shelter.

## PARKS & RECREATION

Kim Shahan, Parks & Recreation Director, read a budget introduction letter, which is summarized as follows: \$286,003 was identified as the 10% reduction, but the proposed budget reflects a reduction of \$42,338. Reasons for the small reduction are: 1) Adding the Youth Services Coordinator (\$43,346); 2) Mowing contract in Park Maintenance (Activity 52) Acct. 231 which includes the Neighborhood Services mowing contract for a total amount of \$197,000. This is an increase of \$132,000 from last year's mowing contract account of \$65,000. Assistant Parks & Recreation Director and one Recreation Supervisor are deleted. Senior Services (Activity 49) shows a decrease of \$13,000, which is an error. This account funds custodial and pest control services for senior recreation facilities, the Mobile Meals program and the Center for Creative Living. If this line item is not restored, one of these programs will reflect a reduction in funding. Request deletion of Recreation Services (Activity 44) \$5,000 capital outlay and move funds to Park Maintenance (Activity 52) and increase by \$1,000 to a total of \$6,000 to buy a sign making machine. Request to move \$12,000 from Athletic & Landscape Maintenance (Activity 54) to Park Maintenance (Activity 52) to bring the Parks Division overtime level back to last year's service level (\$42,000).

Shanklin asked if group life and health and retirement come to \$21,000 for three employees under Admin. and response was yes. Salary of the Youth Services Coordinator was discussed. One senior clerical assistant was moved from Admin back to Senior Services. Amount required for FICA was noted as a federal requirement that is costly.

Shanklin asked how much was spent on little league sports. Shahan said the entire program is about \$600,000 for youth sports and adult programming. Shahan reviewed income received in this regard. Mayor Powell said he had asked that Council be provided information on the services provided by various departments so Council would know what was being reduced if that was their desire.

Shanklin asked who the Leisure Services Administrator is and Shahan said Richard Bonnine. Shanklin said we are spending \$503,000 on Leisure Services and the public needed to know that.

Moeller said it would be difficult for the Museum to absorb a decrease of \$55,000; last year they were cut and employees laid off. A new director has been hired and their debts are being paid, they have recently received accreditation and they should not be reduced in funding. Moeller said they are keeping track of visitors by zip code and only about 20% are from Lawton, so it is bringing in tourists which generates sales tax and revenues in other forms. She asked that funding of \$505,000 be provided. Baxter said the budget book shows they requested \$515,000 and it was noted this was in error. Baxter agreed the museum should receive \$505,000, as did Shanklin who noted the importance of the McMahon Foundation financial support for the Museum.

Baxter suggested the Lakes be given the motor grader being replaced in Public Works and that the savings be used for the Museum operation. Discussion was held regarding the Lakes wanting a compact motor grader and the one from Public Works being full size, as well as the fact that the Lakes currently have a full size motor grader that is very old. Hanna said the public was being denied access to the lakes by not having the roadways adequately maintained, and that Council members could tour the lakes to see what needed to be done. Shanklin pointed out the City spends \$597,000 for the lakes and \$250,000 for lake patrol through the Police and gets back only \$180,000 in revenue. Hanna said the parks are a similar situation.

Shahan said they requested a compact motor grader and a dump truck for the Lakes and the priority would be the compact motor grader.

Bass asked what was funded by \$17,600 in Other Expenses at the lakes. Baker said it is the water bill for the

various restrooms and camping and recreational facilities. Discussion was held as to why the City would be paying water bills for areas leased to others. The City Attorney will report in this regard.

It was noted that the traditional \$50,000 for capital outlay was not included for the Lakes, and that a problem could occur if grant funding becomes available and the City has no source of match to take advantage of the grant. Shanklin reviewed history of the \$50,000 being started when user fees at the lakes were increased and stated it has been included each year since then and should not be deleted.

Haywood asked who would get the ice machine shown in Senior Services and Shahan said the Benjamin O. Davis High Rise, and the television would go to Town Hall.

Bass asked about the travel account in Senior Services containing \$5,725 for only two employees. Shahan said it should be reduced by \$2,780 as a position was eliminated.

Park Maintenance was reviewed; there are 73 neighborhood parks and a total of 81 parks. Mowing amounts were reviewed, as well as the maintenance costs for the Kids Zone Park.

Hanna noted a \$350 weed eater for the Cemetery was high and suggested staff use local vendors so they can get quicker maintenance and likely lower costs than the state contracts may provide.

Regarding Athletic Maintenance, Baxter said he observed five workers in the Lee Boulevard median; one was mowing, one was operating a weed eater, one was watching and two were sitting in a truck, and that is not good. The ratio of supervisors to employees in Parks & Recreation was discussed, as well as the areas they maintain.

Shanklin asked if the health and hospitalization insurance costs \$5,000 per employee per year and Baker said yes, and the employee would pay one-half of the dependent coverage but the City provides full coverage for the employee. Shanklin said that is a good benefit.

The meeting recessed at 7:00 p.m. upon motion, second and roll call vote, and reconvened at 7:06 p.m. with roll call reflecting all members present except Devine.

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Harold Thorne, Acting Police Chief, said 87% of their budget is in personnel costs and the increase was due to step increases. The increase in Acct. 211 is for computer upgrades requested by MIS. Acct. 231 provides funds to make a recruiting video to encourage people to apply to be police officers. Travel funding dropped in administration due to the need to conserve funds. Acct. 279 provides funding for a matching grant.

The Uniform Division is the largest in the department, and Acct. 251 provides for insurance for the officers in case of in-line of duty death, and the premiums went up.

The CID Division shows an increase in Acct. 211 due to computer upgrades. Funding is provided for training in that retirements are anticipated and new officers will require training.

The Technical Services Division requests funding for a microfilm reader/printer. The existing equipment was requested by the City Clerk. Moeller asked if they had considered putting computers in the patrol units. Thorne said studies had been done but it had not been worked out. Possibility of grant funding was noted for this purpose.

Hanna asked the total personnel for the police department and Thorne said 151 officers, there are three vacancies, one retirement is expected July 1, and two have been activated by the military. Requirements for lake patrol, community oriented policing, and various other needs were noted as reducing the manning available for general police work.

Bass asked about the request for five pistols for three officers. Thorne said an officer gets to keep his weapon upon retirement and this would fund weapons for the new hires.

Holmstrom asked about \$10,000 being funded for uniforms for three employees. Thorne said the training section provides funding for equipment such as gun belts and all accessories for the officers and they are provided a complete compliment of clothing and all accessories, and some is included for replacement costs.

#### FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Bart Hadley, Fire Chief, offered to answer questions. Hanna said the Council turned in their computers and asked if they could be used instead of purchasing new ones. Hadley said the funding was for computer upgrades requested by MIS and some of their computers were so old that they had to be replaced to accommodate the upgrade. Baker said the salary for an assistant fire marshal was not included as he has been activated for military

duty for the year, but the slot is retained.

Shanklin asked about the differences in pension costs shown for different employees. Hadley said it is based on a percentage of salary and the salaries determine what must be paid in pension.

Ewing-Holmstrom noted a decrease in travel and training costs. Hadley said they had been advised that some of the costs should be reflected in Account 231 instead.

Bass asked about the increase in dues and memberships. Hadley said it was due to EMT requirements in the contract and these are the dues for that certification.

Shanklin asked if this was the final payment on the lease purchase of the apparatus. Hadley said no, the first payment was made this year, and two more will be required.

Bass asked about costs for educational incentives. Hadley said it is a requirement of the contract to pay additional to those who have certain educational degrees related to fire service, and they are not paid to go to school. Discussion was held on why Lawton's fire trucks are white instead of red.

Regarding the Emergency Management category, Baker said the City has had an annual contract with Comanche County in the amount of \$30,000. Council has directed staff to prepare an Emergency Operations Plan for Lawton and to be able to activate an Emergency Operations Center independent of the county. He said a decision will be needed as to whether to continue to contract with the county or to use these funds for Lawton's operations and hopefully obtain an additional \$15,000 in grant funding. He said a coordinator could be hired with these funds and the person would be assigned to the Fire Department.

Haywood asked about the number of African-Americans and females on the Fire Department. Hadley said there is one African-American, no females, and they needed to do a better job in recruiting.

Discussion was held on the possibility of grant funding and the lack of budgeted funds to provide a match. Baxter said he felt \$50,000 should be included to match grants because it is likely there will be a lot of grant funding available. Moeller suggested having an account set aside for this purpose that any department could access should they locate any grants, rather than each department including funding for this purpose and possibly not using it and others needing it and not having it.

#### COMMENTS.

Mayor Powell said tomorrow's budget meeting would not be held, and the next budget meeting will be on Monday, June 10 at 5:00 p.m. The need for a report from the Water Committee was noted.

Ewing-Holmstrom said the City Picnic held last Saturday was very successful.

Mayor Powell said notice had been received that Energetix has received the DEQ permit.

Mayor Powell said he was unable to attend the City Picnic as he was at a very important event at the Goodyear plant.

Baxter thanked United grocery stores for donating meat and supplies for the City Picnic.

Ewing-Holmstrom thanked the Mayor for attending the Goodyear events.

There was no further business to consider and the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. upon motion, second and roll call vote.